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Workbook for the workshop on children and traffic

Proceedings of the workshop on children and traffic

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Workbook

**for the
Workshop on Children and Traffic**

Copenhagen, May 2.-3., 2002

**Edited by Thyra Uth Thomsen
Roskilde University**

Introduction

The Workshop on Children and Traffic was arranged by Thyra Uth Thomsen, Roskilde University, Denmark, and funded by the Danish Transport Council. It took place on May 2. -3. 2002 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The target audience of the workshop was researchers focusing on children and traffic from a social science perspective. The aim of the workshop was to accumulate and exchange 'state of the art knowledge' on the subject matter, to get acquainted with fellow researchers within the field, and to establish a network for future co-operation. The presentations mainly focused on the following topics:

- How children's environment affects their mobility
- Children's perspectives on traffic/mobility
- Educational perspectives on children's mobility
- Children's independent/dependent mobility
- Children in different real-traffic settings

The discussions, however, went beyond these themes and identified children's rights and children's participation in decision making as core topics.

In the following I will address the three major outcomes of the workshop, that is the gathering of themes and opportunities for future research within the area of children and mobility, the establishment of the Network on Children and Mobility and finally the participants' contributions to the workshop itself.

Themes and opportunities for future research

The following is the result of a brainstorm on future challenges within this field of research. The brainstorm brought about a wide variety of topics, which deserve our attention. The topics can be summarized in a small number of interrelated areas:

Human rights/children's rights

- Charters
- Participation and involvement of children
- Best approach to include children in policy making processes
- Health, e.g. allergies and time spent in cars

Children as family members

- Access:
 - a) How is children's accessibility affected by family structure/family's car ownership?
 - b) Positive and negative effects of car accessibility on children's lives in general
- Reasons for parental escorting in general and parent's perception of risk

What is a child friendly city/suburb/small town/rural area?

- Planning for real with children
- Children's pictures of accessibility as a planning tool
- Safer routes to school in rural districts
- Lack of focus on trips linked to leisure activities

Shaping child friendly mobility

- How to influence policy makers, planners etc. to improve children's conditions
- Lack of communication between different road user groups
- Lack of communication between children, road engineers and educators
- Collaboration with landscape architects in order to create room for non-organized leisure activities and in order to increase walking
- The privatisation of public transport versus the financing of children's transport

The role of information and experience in shaping the worldview of children

- Car usage and the perception of the world and danger
- Children as information seekers and the role of IT
- The link between media and the perception of mobility

Intensive comparative studies

- Behaviour-perception-expectations
- EU, Asia, Africa, USA, Australia, etc. (research gap in developing countries)
- Lack of cross cultural perspectives in mobility research on children

Explanation/ methodology

- Transition matrix of behaviour (behavioural changes over time, longitudinal studies of children's mobility behaviour)
- Disaggregating 'children', e.g. in different ethnic groups
- Gender differences in children's travel behaviour
- Lack of systematic, cross cultural collection of travel data on children
- Lack of knowledge about the best mechanisms for affecting children's long term mobility awareness and behaviour

Clearly, the above indicates a deep concern with the dilemma of children being both the objects and subjects of research. On the one hand we all want to create the best possible conditions for children in the modern (auto)mobile age, which on the other hand may lead to the pitfall of imposing our own expert/adult worldview rather than finding out what the *children* want.

The deeply felt need to integrate children in the research and policymaking processes raises fundamental methodological concerns that need to be addressed. Perhaps, the pedagogic field of research, which has dealt with these issues for the longest time, can be of inspiration in this matter.

Moreover the above clearly recognizes that children are not isolated research objects, but active parts of a family, society and multicultural world with many different living conditions and worldviews. Children are not just 'children' per se, but also boys and girls from Europe, Ghana or elsewhere. Also, they do not stay children for long. They turn into adults and bring forward and

further develop our legacy, which gives us even one more reason to be concerned with the ‘mobility heritage’ that we may pass on to them.

Finally, the above pinpoints some of the many blank spots in our knowledge on children and mobility. On the other hand it also pinpoints our lack of ability to transfer what we *do* know into the creation of a better environment for children. As far as our lack of knowledge is concerned the group of international researchers joining this workshop sympathized with the need for systematic, longitudinal and cross-cultural research on children and mobility, which could be facilitated by an international, comparative and long-term collection of travel data on children.

The Network on Children and Mobility

So far, the Network on Children and Mobility consists of the participants of the workshop in Copenhagen in May 2002. You can find the list of participants and contact information at the end of the Workbook. However, several other researchers have shown interest in participating in the Network in order to share information, in order to participate in future meetings or in order to engage in joint research in the future. Mrs. Thyra Uth Thomsen (tut@teksam.ruc.dk) and Mrs. Trine Nordgaard (trinen@ruc.dk) at Roskilde University, Denmark, will be the administrators the Network on Children and Mobility. Please use the above e-mails, if you have anything you want to share with the network or if you would like to join the network.

The network administrators will try to rise funding for future network meetings in Denmark. The date for the next meeting of the network has not been set – yet – but will probably take place in spring 2004.

Participants’ contributions to the workshop

The participants’ contributions to the workshop are contained in the following programme of the workshop. You can download material about the presentations you find interesting by pressing the hyperlink beneath the title of the presentation.

Papers were optional and thus the enclosed material covering the different presentations does not necessarily cover the entire presentation. The enclosed material consists of either papers, slides or other relevant information that the participants chose to add to this workbook. Please do not hesitate to contact the researchers for further information. Contact information is listed at the end of the workbook.

Programme

May 2, 2002

9.00	Welcome by Thyra Uth Thomsen , Assistant Research Professor at Roskilde University Denmark	
9.15	Opening speech by John Whitelegg, Visiting Professor at Roskilde University, Denmark. Transcript (58k)	
9.45	Discussion	
10.00	Coffee break	
10.20	Participants' presentations:	Chair of this session:
	1) Roger Mackett: Understanding the health and car dependency impacts of children's car use. Paper (372k)	Karin Sandqvist
	2) Liv Rakel Øvstedal: Not yet...public transport users. Summary report (210k)	
	3) Maria Johansson: I am a parent and a driver. A study of parents' environmental trust and children's travelling. Paper (124k) , overheads (247k)	
11.50	Lunch	
12.50	Participants' presentations:	Chair of this session:
	4) Thyra Uth Thomsen: Children's perspectives on mobility. Paper (55k)	Gina Porter
	5) Kenneth Lupton & Mariana Bayley: Children's perspectives on road safety. Paper (158k)	
13.50	Coffee break	
14.10	Participants' presentations:	Chair of this session:
	6) Holger Dalkmann: Opportunities for youth awareness – choosing the right mode. Experience from a German campaign “Youth and mobility” Overheads I (4.5M) , overheads II (2.7M)	Erin Ryeng
	7) Marco Viviani: Implementing European on line services for mobility education to save energy. Overheads (888k) , brochure (447k)	
	8) Liv Rakel Øvstedal: Cycling safely by experience – training school children in Eberg traffic course. Paper (316k)	
15.40	End of sessions	
19.00	Dinner	

May 3, 2002

9.00	Participants' presentations:	Chair of this session:
	10) Eirin Olaussen Ryeng & Marianne Stølan Rostoft: Mode choice among school children compared to their motoric skills, as well as their freedom to stay and travel outdoors. Paper (289k)	Maria Johansson
	11) Karin Sandqvist & Jeanette Knudsen: How do inner-city adolescents get in contact with the countryside? Paper (154k)	
10.00	Coffee break	
10.20	Participants' presentations:	Chair of this session:
	12) Gina Porter & Kathrin Blaufuss: Children's mobility, transport and traffic in Southern Ghana. Paper (272k) , overheads (137k)	Kenneth Lupton
	13) Eirin Ryeng & Liv Rakel Øvstedal: Observing children's behaviour in traffic. Paper (207k)	
11.20	Discussion and collective brainstorm - part I:	Thyra Uth Thomsen
	a) Future challenges within this field of research	
12.00	Lunch	
13.00	Discussion and collective brainstorm – part II:	Chair of this session:
	b) Potential for the establishment of a network among researchers within the field	Thyra Uth Thomsen
	c) Next step	
14.00	End of day 2	

List of participants in order of presentations:

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Ph.D. synopsis "Children's everyday mobility and welfare – with a focus on parental escorting".

[Paper \(152k\)](#).